

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

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INFO AMCONSUL MEDAN

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C O N F I D E N T I A L JAKARTA 9505

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PINT, ID

SUBJECT: THE FUTURE OF THE PPP

1. SUMMARY: FOLLOWING ARE THE MAJOR CONCLUSIONS OF AN EMBASSY STUDY OF THE FUTURE PROSPECTS OF THE MOSLEM-BASED UNITY DEVELOPMENT PARTY (PPP), BEING POUCHED TO THE DEPARTMENT. THE PPP, IN MAKING SLIGHT STATISTICAL GAINS DURING THE 1977 PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS, MADE IMPORTANT IN-ROADS AMONG STUDETNS, URBAN DWELLERS AND MODERNIST MOSLEMS. THE PARTY MUST OVERCOME MAJOR PROBLEMS, THOUGH, TO MOUNT A REAL CHALLENGE TO THE GOVERNMENT PARTY CLOKAR, CHIEF

AMONG THESE PROBLEMS ARE: (1) BROADENING THE RELIGIOUS BASE OF THE PPP; (2) RESOLVING THE PARTY'S INTERNAL CONFLICTS, ESPECIALLY THE TRADIONALIST/MODERNIST SPLIT; (3) FINDING REAL ISSUES AND ATTRACTIVE NEW LEADERS TO HOLD AND BUILD ON THE GAINS OF 1977; AND (4) CRACKING GOLKAR'S MONOLPHY ON THE ALLEGIANCE OF THE ARMED FORCES. WE DOUBT THAT PPP CAN RESOLVE THESE PROBLEMS AND FEEL THAT, BY THE NEXT PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS IN 1982, THE PARTY MAY HAVE CRUMBLD INTO ITS CONSTITUENT PARTS, IN FACT AND PERHAPS EVEN IN FORM. END SUMMARY.

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2. THE PPP MANAGED TO MAKE SLIGHT STATISTICAL GAINS IN THE 1977 PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS, COMPARED TO THE COMBINED MOSLEM-PARTY VOTE IN 1971. MORE IMPORTANT, IT ESTABLISHED NEW BEACHHEADS OF SUPPORT AMONG POLITICALLY SOPHISTICATED URBAN DWELLERS, YOUTH AND - PROBABLY MOST IMPORTANT - MODERNIST MOSLEMS, HERETOFORE ESTRANGED FROM THE LARGELY

TRADITIONALIST PPP LEADERSHIP.

3. THE PPP'S CAPACITY TO EXPAND THESE BEACHHEADS AND LAUNCH A REAL CHALLENGE TO THE RULING GOVERNMENT PARTY GOLKAR, HOWEVER, DEPENDS ON ITS ABILITY TO RESOLVE A NUMBER OF CRITICAL PROBLEMS. FIRST, THE PPP MUST EXPAND ITS APPEAL BEYOND THE CIRCLE OF ARDENTLY PRACTICING MOSLEMS, WHO REPRESENT A LARGE BUT PERMANENT MINORITY. THE PARTY'S HEAVY-HANDED USE OF THE RELIGIOUS ISSUE DURING THE 1977 CAMPAIGN, HOWEVER, HAD THE OPPOSITE IMPACT, NARROWING PPP'S RELIGIOUS BASE AND RAISING NEW SUSPICIONS AMONG NOMINAL MOSLEMS, CHRISTIANS AND THE MILITARY.

4. SECOND, THE PARTY MUST OVERCOME THE ANCIENT AND STILL STRONG CLEAVAGE BETWEEN ITS TRADITIONALIST AND MODERNIST WINGS AND RESOLVE THE NUMEROUS IDEOLOGICAL AND PERSONALITY CLASHES WHICH DIVIDE IT. IN THE FEW WEEKS SINCE THE ELECTION, SERIOUS INTERNICINE WARFARE HAS BROKEN OUT IN IMPORTANT PPP BRANCHES IN JAKARTA AND NORTH SUMATRA, WHILE THE CENTRAL AND EAST JAVA BRANCHES SEEM INCREASINGLY TO BE RUNNING OPERATIONS INDEPENDENT OF FIRM JAKARTA CONTROL, DEMONSTRATING AFRESH THAT THE PPP IS A SINGLE PARTY MORE IN NAME THAN IN FACT.

5. THIRD, THE PPP MUST FIND SOME ATTRACTIVE ISSUES AND CAPABLE NEW LEADERS, IF IT WANTS TO WIN THE PERMANENT

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AFFECTIONS OF THE PROGRAM-ORIENTED YOUTH AND MODERNIST MOSLEMS NOW FLIRTING WITH IT. SOME YOUNGER PPP-ERS, ADMITTING THAT THE PARTY'S 1977 CAMPAIGN WAS VIRTUALLY DEVOID OF ISSUES, ARE TRYING THROUGH VARIOUS CHANNELS TO BRING A NEW IDEOLOGICAL VITALITY TO THEIR PARTY. THEIR EFFORTS, HOWEVER, WILL PROBABLY MEET A STONE WALL OF LEADERSHIP INDIFFERENCE, SINCE THE PPP SENIOR STALWARTS SEEM TO BE CONCERNED PRIMARILY WITH PROTECTING THEIR OWN POSITION. EFFORTS TO MEET THIS PROBLEM HEAD-ON BY CONVENING A NATIONAL PARTY CONVENTION TO ELECT NEW LEADERSHIP, AS SOME HAVE SUGGESTED, ARE PROBABLY DOOMED TO FAILURE, BECAUSE OF THE STRONG OPPOSITION OF BOTH VESTED PPP INTERESTS AND THE GOVERNMENT.

6. FINALLY, THE PPP MUST CRACK THE GOLKAR MONOPOLY ON SUPPORT FROM THE MILITARY IF IT ASPIRES TO MOUNT A SERIOUS CHALLENGE TO GOLKAR'S POLITICAL DOMINANCE. SOME PPP INTELLECTUALS HAVE SUGGESTED A NEW EFFORT TO SEARCH OUT, COMMUNICATE AND COOPERATE WITH POTENTIALLY SYMPATHETIC MILITARY LEADERS, WHILE CASTING ASIDE SOME OF THE SYMBOLIC AND IDEOLOGICAL ISLAMIC BAGGAGE WHICH SCARES THE ARMED FORCES. SO FAR, NOT SUPRISINGLY, THIS SUGGESTION HAS BEEN

CONSPICUOUSLY IGNORED BY THE PPP POWER ELITE, WHICH SEEMS CONTENT AS USUAL TO LAMBAST THE CORRUPTION OF THE ARMED FORCES AND GRUMBLE AT THEIR HEAVY-HANDEDNESS, WITHOUT COMING TO GRIPS WITH THE REALITY OF THEIR POWER.

7. DESPITE THESE PROBLEMS, THE PPP PROBABLY HAS ENOUGH STEAM LEFT FROM ITS MODESTLY SUCCESSFUL 1977 CAMPAIGN TO CARRY IT INTO 1978 SUBSTANTIALLY THROUGH PRECARIOUSLY INTACT. WITHOUT THE RALLYING CRY OF AN UP-COMING ELECTION OR THE MOLLIFYING FRUITS OF A REAL ROLE IN GOVERNMENT, HOWEVER, THE PPP AFTER THAT MAY BEGIN TO FALL APART. AT THAT POINT, DEPENDING ON ITS OWN AND THE GOVERNMENT'S WILL, THE PPP WILL PROBABLY EVOLVE IN ONE OF THREE DIRECTIONS. IT MIGHT SIMPLY STAGGER ALONG, PAPERING-  
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OVER CRISES AS THEY ARISE BUT GRADUALLY LOSING MUCH OF ITS ALREADY LIMITED GRIP ON THE ELECTORATE AND ON PARLIAMENT, WHERE IT STILL PERFORMS SOME CONTROL FUNCTION. A SECOND, MUCH LESS LIKELY POSSIBILITY, IS ANOTHER DIRECT GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION INTO MOSLEM POLITICS, TO TRY TO AGAIN GLUE TOGETHER THE GOVERNMENT-INSPIRE MOSLEM COALITION, PERHAPS WITH A LARGER MODERNIST IN-PUT.

8. ON BALANCE, THOUGH, A THIRD ALTERNATIVE MAY BE THE MOST LIKELY - THAT THE PPP WILL GRADUALLY CEASE TO EXIST, TO BE REPLACED BY SOMETHING LIKE THE OLD CONSTELLATION OF MOSLEM PARTIES. THE PALACE APPARENTLY FEELS ITS OWN DECISION TO CREATE A SINGLE MOSLEM PARTY A TACTICAL MISTAKE AND WOULD PROBABLY ACQUIESCE IN THIS DEVELOPMENT. IN THIS EVENTUALITY, THE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS OF 1982 MIGHT RESEMBLE THOSE OF 1971 IN CONTENT AND RESULT.  
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